



Higher Degrees by Research (HDR) Partnership procedure

Section 1 - Preamble

(1) This Procedure is effective from 1 October 2019.

Section 2 - Purpose

(2) This Procedure sets out the requirements for establishing and managing partnerships for the delivery of higher degrees by research (HDR) courses between Deakin University and one or more partner organisations or institutions.

Section 3 - Scope

(3) This Procedure applies to the development and maintenance of HDR partnerships with other entities in Australia and overseas. It does not apply to partnerships relating to placements, study abroad or exchange programs or work-integrated learning provided as part of an HDR course.

Section 4 - Policy

(4) This Procedure is pursuant to the [Higher Degrees by Research \(HDR\) policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedure

(5) The University may enter into formal collaborative arrangements with partner organisations or institutions for the development and delivery of HDRs.

(6) HDR partnership arrangements may include:

- a. joint HDRs in collaboration with other academic institutions
- b. shared delivery and supervision of HDR courses offered by the University in collaboration with a HDR partner organisation and/or HDR partner institution, including in-country HDRs where Deakin students are primarily located outside Australia at an HDR partner organisation and/or HDR partner institution for the duration of their course.

Establishing HDR partnerships

(7) HDR supervisors, researchers, Faculty Executive Deans, Institute Directors or nominees of a faculty or institute may propose the establishment of HDR partnerships.

(8) Proposals to collaborate with organisations or institutions will be made in writing to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or nominee using an approved template and signed by the Faculty Executive Dean or Institute Director.

Proposals will include the following:

- a. an outline of the strategic value of the partnership to the University and its contribution to achieving the University's research goals
- b. the nature and history of any existing relationship between the University and the partner organisation or institution
- c. a risk analysis using the University's [Risk Matrix](#)
- d. a due diligence report on the partner organisation or institution using an approved template
- e. a plan for the development and support of the expected HDR cohort/s covered by the arrangement
- f. an outline of how the proposed arrangement would benefit HDR students covered by the arrangement
- g. evidence that appropriate physical and information technology infrastructure and information resources are available at the partner organisation or institution for the HDR project/s
- h. any further information required for particular partnership arrangements including joint HDR courses referred to in clauses 10-15.

Requirement for in-country HDR partnerships

(9) For an in-country program the University will:

- a. be the sole academic institution in which in-country students will be enrolled for the duration of the HDR course
- b. administer the HDR course enrolment, management and assessment in accordance with its policies and procedures
- c. provide shared research training and supervision with the partner organisation throughout the HDR course in accordance with Deakin's policies and procedures.

Requirements for joint HDR partnerships

(10) Joint HDR courses may only be arranged with institutions that are accredited to offer, enrol and confer a HDR award at the relevant level.

(11) The University may offer a joint HDR with one or more partner institution/s in accordance with either of the following:

- a. Type A: inter-institutional joint arrangements for the development, delivery and assessment of a course:
 - i. into which students will be admitted on a regular basis; and
 - ii. that leads to the award of a single jointly badged testamur or, where this is not allowed by the regulatory requirements of the partner institution/s, separate testamurs that indicate that the course was undertaken as a joint course
- b. Type B: arrangements established for the joint supervision of one or more students on a case-by-case basis (including cotutelle arrangements) where:
 - i. student management and assessment may be administered separately by each institution
 - ii. separate testamurs are awarded that indicate that the course was undertaken jointly.

(12) Type A inter-institutional arrangement proposals will demonstrate that:

- a. there is an ongoing research collaboration with the partner institution/s or research group/s; and
- b. the arrangement is likely to attract a cohort of several HDR students on a regular basis who will spend a period of time at both institutions.

(13) Type B joint supervision proposals will demonstrate that:

- a. a researcher or research group is successfully collaborating with a researcher or research group from another institution/s although there may not necessarily be long-term strategic benefits or involvement of cohorts of students, and
- b. a student will spend a period of time at both institutions.

(14) All joint HDR courses will be established and delivered in accordance with the requirements of the Australian [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2015 \(Cth\)](#). Where there are inconsistencies between Deakin University's policies and procedures and those of the partner institution/s, the parties will agree on procedures that ensure that the requirements in the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#) are satisfied.

(15) Deakin University will retain the right not to award an HDR arising out of a joint program, in which case the testamur and any supporting documentation of the partner institution/s will not refer to Deakin University. Deakin University will also retain the right to solely award an HDR arising out of a joint program, in which case the testamur and any supporting documentation will not refer to the partner institution.

Partnership agreements

(16) An HDR partnership agreement will be the subject of a written agreement between the University and the partner organisation or institution, supplemented by a separate agreement with the student.

(17) HDR partnership agreements will be:

- a. drafted or reviewed by the General Counsel's Office in accordance with the [Contracts policy](#)
- b. approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or nominee.

Approval of joint HDRs on academic grounds

(18) A Type A joint HDR will be approved as an award course by the Academic Board in accordance with the [Higher Education Courses Approval and Review procedure](#).

(19) A Type B joint HDR will be approved by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Researcher Development. Where the rules to be applied are less stringent than those specified in Deakin's HDR policies and procedures, the academic arrangement will be approved by Academic Board.

(20) The academic course proposal requiring approval of the Academic Board will be accompanied by a draft joint HDR agreement/s developed in accordance with this Procedure and agreed to by all parties.

Monitoring, auditing and review

(21) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or nominee will oversee HDR partnerships and ensure that:

- a. agreed procedures are complied with
- b. inter-organisational arrangements are working effectively; and
- c. supervisory arrangements are appropriate.

(22) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research or nominee will normally visit each partner organisation or institution annually to meet with staff members and students, either in person or virtually (i.e. via videoconference), or they may invite the partner to provide an annual written report on the partnership.

(23) A report will be provided by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research to the Academic Board, via the Research and Research Training Committee on an annual basis on all HDR partnerships in the previous year. Where applicable, these reports will include information on:

- a. the continuing alignment of the partnership with the University's strategic direction and research agenda and the ongoing commitment of the partner organisation or institution to the HDR program
- b. visits to partners and/or the reports provided by partners, as well as reports provided by the relevant faculty/ies or institute/s
- c. the provision of support to partner academic staff and management
- d. student enrolment numbers, including data on progression, attrition, examination outcomes, completion rates and completion times to ensure equivalent outcomes for students
- e. evidence of compliance with research integrity, ethics and occupational health and safety requirements
- f. issues raised by partners in relation to the University
- g. issues in relation to quality assurance and how the University meets its obligations under the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#).

(24) HDR partnerships will be comprehensively reviewed, in accordance with the agreement, as well as an independent audit of the partnership program, at least every five years to ensure that the terms of the agreement and the requirements of the [Higher Education Standards Framework](#) are being met.

Record-keeping

(25) The University will keep a current register of all HDR partnership agreements.

New or changed arrangements

(26) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research will notify the Risk and Compliance Unit and the Director, Academic Governance and Standards of new or changed arrangements with a partner involving HDR training and supervision. The Director will ensure that the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\)](#) is notified where required under the [TEQSA Act 2011 \(Cth\)](#).

Section 6 - Definitions

(27) For the purpose of this Procedure:

- a. HDR partner institution: public or private Australian or international higher education provider with the power to award the degree being undertaken and recognised by Deakin University for the purposes of this Procedure.
- b. HDR partner organisation: a public or private industry, government, institutional (including non-higher education providers) or community organisation located within Australia or offshore with which the University has established a formal relationship to collaboratively deliver HDR courses.
- c. in-country program: shared delivery and supervision of HDR courses offered by the University in collaboration with an international HDR partner organisation and/or HDR partner institution, where its students are primarily located outside Australia at an HDR partner organisation and/or partner HDR institution for the duration of their course.
- d. joint course: a joint course is one offered by Deakin in conjunction with one or more higher education providers in Australia or overseas, leading to the conferral of a single award.

Status and Details

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Effective Date	1st October 2019
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Expiry Date	To Be Advised
Responsible Executive	Julie Owens Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research +61 3 522 73486
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